

A Mournful Ditty of the Lady Rosamond, King Henry the seconds

Concubine, who was poysoned to death by Queen Elenor in V Woodstock Bower near Oxford.

To the tune of,

Flying Fame,



Whenas King Henry rul'd this land, the second of that name,
Before the Queen he dearly lov'd a fair and Princely Dame:
Most perfect was her beauty found, her labour and her face.
A sweeter creature in the world did never Prince embrace.

Her crisped locks like threads of gold appear'd to each mans sight,
Her comely eyes like Orient Pearls did cast a heavenly light.
The blood within her Christal cheek did such a colour give,
As if the Lilly and the Rose for Maister-ship did strive,

Then Rosamond, fair Rosamond, her name was call'd so,
To whom Dame Elenor our Queen was known a mortal foe:
The King therefore for her defence against the furious Queen,
At Woodstock builded such a Bower the like was never seen.

Most curiously this Bower was built of stone and timber strong,
A hundred and fifty doors did to this Bower belong,
And they so cunningly contriv'd with turnings round about,
That none but with a clew of thred could enter in or out.

And for his Love and Ladies sake that was so fair and bright,
The building of that Bower he gave unto a ballant Knight.

But Fortune that doth often frown, where she before did smile,
The Kings delight, the Ladies joy full soon she did beguile.

For when the Kings ungracious son whom he did high advance
Against his father raised wars within the Realm of France:
But yet before our comely King the English land forsook,
Of Rosamond his Lady fair, his last farewell he took,

O Rosamond the onely Rose, that pleaseth best mine eye,
The fairest Rose in all the world to feed my fantasy.
The flower of my affected heart, whose sweetness doth exceed.
My Royal Rose a thousand times I bid thee now farewell.

For I must leave my famous Flower, my sweetest Rose a space,
And cross the seas to famous France proud Rebels to abuse,
But yet my Rose be sure thou shalt my coming shortly see,
And in my heart while hence I am I'll bear my Rose with me.

When Rosamond the Lady fair did hear the King say so,
The sorrow of her grieved heart, her outward looks did show
And from her clear and Christal eyes the tears gush'd out apace,
Which like the silver Pearls did rain down her comely face,

Her lips like to the Coral red did wax both wan and pale,
And for the sorrow to the conceit of her vital spirits did fail.
And falling down all in swoon before King Henries face,
Full oft within his princely arms her body did embrace.

And twenty times with wavy eyes he kiss'd her tender cheek
Until he had reviv'd again, her senses mild and meek,
Why grieves my Rose, my sweetest Rose the King did often say,
Because quoth she to bloody wars my Lord must part away.

But with your grace in Foreign Coasts among your foes untried,
You go to hazard life and limb, why should I stay behind?
I'd rather let me like a Page, your sword and target bear,
That on my breast the blow may light that should offend you there.

O let me in your Royal tent prepare your bed at night,
And with sweet baths refresh your grace at your return from fight,
So I your presence may enjoy, no toil I will refuse,
But wanting you my life is death which both true Love abuse.

Content thy self my dearest Love thy rest at home shall be
In Englands sweet and pleasant soil for travel fits not thee.
Fair Ladies seek no bloody wars sweet peace their pleasure breeds
The nourisher of hearts content, which fancy first did feed.

My Rose shall rest in Woodstock-bower with musicks sweet delight,
While I among the fighting Wikes against my foes do fight.
My Rose in Robes of Pearl and Gold with Diamonds richly light
Shall dance the Galliards of my Love while I my foes do smite.

And you Sir Thomas whom I trust to be my Loves defence
Be careful of my Royal Rose when I am parted hence,
And there what he saith I'll fight as though his heart would break
And Rosamond for very grief not one plain word could speak,

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And there what he shall say as though his heart would break
And Rosamond for very grief not one plain word could speak,



As at the parting well they might,
in heart be grieved soze,
After that day fair Rosamond
the King did see no more.
For when his Grace had past the Seas
and into France was gone,
Queen Elenor with evious heart
to Woodstock came anon.

And forth she cal'd this trusty Knight,
who keep this curious Bower,
Who with his clew of twined thred
came from that famous flowes,
And when that they had wounded him
the Queen this thred did get.
And went where Lady Rosamond
was like an Angel set.

But when the Queen with steadfast eyes
beheld her heavenly face,
She was amazed in her mind,
at her exceeding grace.
Cast of off thy Robes from thee she said
that rich and costly be,
And drink thou up this deadly draught
which I have brought for thee,

But presently upon her knee
sweet Rosmond did fall
And pardon of the Queen she crav'd
for her offences all.
Take up on my poyntful years,
said Rosamond did cry.
And let me not with popson strong
enforced be to dye.

I will renounce this sinful life,
and in a Cloyster bide,
Or else be banisht if you please
to range the world so wide.
And for that fault which I have done,
though I was forc'd thereto,
Preserve my life, and punish me
as you think good to do.

And with these words her Lilly hand
she wrong full often there
And down along her comely cheeks
proceeded many a tear
But nothing could this curious Queen
therewith appeared be
The cup of deadly popson fill'd
as she fate on her knee.

She gave that comely Dame to drink
who took it in her hand,
And from her bended knees arose
and on her feet did stand.
And casting up her eyes to heaven
she did for mercy call,
And drinking up the popson strong
her life she lost withall.

And when that death through every limb
had done her greatest spight,
Her chiefest foes did plain confess
she was a glorious sight.
Her body then they did entomb,
when life was all away,
At Woodstock near to Oxford town
as may be seen this day.